> no one would be less excusable than myself for the concealment or suppression of the convictions which protracted and thorough investigation has established in relation to the `enshrouded moral pestilence' which overspreads the land. (1866, 8)

Not `speaking out' about masturbation would therefore be just another form of the `repression' which caused it. A prominent doctor like himself has no choice but to `speak out' or become not merely a conniver at disease but its most conspicuous victim and contagious source.[xvii]

Moreover, the doctor's silence would amount to the contagion of the most likely source of deliverance from a plague of epic biblical dimension. Workman's language here strikingly resembles the language of pestilence and deliverance with which he ritualistically inaugurated his superintendency of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum in 1853. Then he was the deliverer of an institution which microcosmically resembled a world. Here he presents himself as the deliverer of nation which macrocosmically resembles an institution.

On one hand the nature of his superintendency has changed over the years, become less insecurely institutional and more confidently national; on the other, the nation itself has been `institutionalized'. What remains relatively constant between the minor `plague' of the 1850s and this major one of the 1860s is Workman's heroic role. Identifying one epidemic with another, and identifying silence with the source of the pestilence if not the pestilence itself, Workman justifies his role as national medical spokesman even as he invents it.

Masturbation itself seems rather lost or non-existent; perhaps in Workman's mind there was no such thing.[xviii] The `issue' becomes `issues', including some vaguely articulated but perhaps strongly felt change in the national temper towards what Workman identifies as `repression', and some corresponding changes in the nature of the medical profession itself. As it becomes more socially important, `speaking out' in the critical way Workman advocates, becomes both more important and more difficult. The professional is potentially the accomplice.